

HONORING LIEUTENANT GENERAL
(RETIRED) ROBERT LEWIS
"SAM" WETZEL

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 1, 2022

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary American patriot, soldier, mentor, and hero, Lt. Gen. (RET.) Robert Lewis "Sam" Wetzel. He transitioned on Thursday, January 20, 2022. His Funeral Mass was held on Friday, January 28, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. at St. Anne Catholic Church in Columbus, Georgia followed by a military burial at the Fort Benning National Cemetery and visitation at the National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center.

Lt. Gen. (RET.) Robert Lewis "Sam" Wetzel was born in Clarksburg, West Virginia on October 6, 1930. His impressive 34-year military career began after he graduated from Irving High School in 1948. He planned to attend Purdue University, but ultimately went to the United States Military Academy at West Point. After graduating from West Point in 1952 as an Infantry Officer, he was immediately deployed to Korea, where he served as a Company Commander. In 1961, as a captain, he commanded a mechanized infantry company in Germany.

In 1968, as a Lieutenant Colonel, Wetzel was deployed to South Vietnam to serve as the commander of the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment (United States), also known as the "Polar Bears". During a firefight, an enemy bullet grazed his forehead leaving a small but permanent scar. The abrasion and his actions during the Vietnam War prompted his nomination for a Purple Heart, which he declined, however, believing that his wound was not severe enough to warrant being awarded a Purple Heart.

Following his return from Vietnam, he was promoted to the rank of Colonel and assumed command of a brigade at Fort Carson, Colorado. In 1975, following promotion to the rank of Brigadier General, he was sent to West Germany, where he commanded the First Infantry Division. Following his command with the First Infantry Division, he received his second star from the Commander of all European and American forces in Europe, the renowned, General Alexander Haig.

Wetzel went on to serve as General Haig's Chief of Staff in Belgium from 1978 to 1979. During this time, he worked with his staff to develop a response to the Soviet Union's deployment of nuclear missiles in Europe. The ultimate strategy was to deploy the Pershing II missiles in Europe, so that Moscow could be hit in a matter of minutes, shortening the response time for the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, domestic political battles began in NATO countries about deploying the Pershing II missiles, and that strategy was deferred. After his tenure as General Haig's Chief of Staff, Wetzel commanded the Third Infantry Division in Würzburg, where he led his division to victory in the annual war games staged in West Germany.

In 1981, Wetzel was diagnosed with what was thought to be terminal melanoma cancer and was given less than a year to live. During this time, the Army offered him full medical disability in exchange for retirement, but he re-

fused the offer, signed a waiver, and remained on active duty. The Army sent him back to the United States, where he managed to make a full recovery and assume command of the infantry training center in Fort Benning, Georgia.

In 1983, Wetzel was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General and sent to Germany as the Deputy Commander in Chief of U.S. Forces in Europe as the NATO allies had finally approved the Pershing II plan. Upon his arrival, Wetzel's main responsibility was to receive and deploy the Pershing II missiles amid anti-war demonstrations all over Europe. It is argued that the Pershing II plan was one of three key factors that contributed to the defeat of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

In 1986, Senior Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, Colin Powell, succeeded Wetzel in command of V Corps in Frankfurt, Germany. This was his last assignment before retirement.

Following his military service, he continued to serve his community and make a positive impact in the lives of others. His contributions include serving as the Commander in Chief of the Military Order of the World Wars, a Veterans organization of commissioned officers, which is committed to promoting national security, patriotism, good citizenship, and service to one's country. During his stint as Commander in Chief, he worked tirelessly to educate the public, local civic clubs like Kiwanis and Rotary, and the media on national security issues while also instilling patriotism and leadership skills in young people through Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, JROTC, ROTC, and other youth programs.

Among his numerous honors and awards are the Army Distinguished Service Medal, a Bronze Star, two Legions of Merit, six Air Medals, a Joint Superior Service Medal, a Meritorious Service Medal, and a Combat Infantryman's Badge with Star.

Lt. Gen. (RET.) Wetzel accomplished much throughout his life, but none of this would have been possible without his enduring faith in God and the love and support of his wife, Eileen; their children, Margaret, Robert, Eileen, Theodore, Patricia, Catherine, and Michael; and a host of other family, friends, and associates, all of whom will miss him dearly.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House of Representatives join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the more than 730,000 residents of the Second Congressional District of Georgia in paying tribute to Lt. Gen. (RET.) Robert Lewis "Sam" Wetzel for his extraordinary service to his nation, his community, and to humankind. We extend our deepest condolences to his family, friends, and all those who mourn his loss.

HONORING AND CONGRATULATING
THE SERVICE OF LT. COL. JOHN
"KARL" MARKS

HON. VICKY HARTZLER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 1, 2022

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the service of one of the highest-time fighter pilots in the U.S. Air Force, Lt. Col. John "Karl" Marks.

On September 1, 2021, U.S. Air Force Reserve pilot, Lt. Col. Marks made history when-

ever he became the only pilot to reach 7,000 hours in the A-10C Warthog; in addition to becoming one of the highest-time fighter pilots in the U.S. Air Force. Lt. Col. Marks is assigned to the 442nd Fighter Wing based out of Whiteman Air Force Base. He has an impressive career which spans over three decades with over 3,610 flights, 1,150 combat hours from thirteen combat deployments in multiple theaters of operations, and his most memorable combat mission of the destruction of 23 Iraqi tanks in a trio of missions during Desert Storm.

It has been said that Lt. Col. Marks is a humble and outstanding attack pilot who loves to fly and brings an immense amount of invaluable knowledge to the 442nd Fighter Wing. Among the incredible feat of achieving 7,000 hours in a single aircraft type, Lt. Col. Marks has had memorable missions from Desert Storm I, Desert Storm II, and from Afghanistan. During his time in Afghanistan's Kunar Valley in 2014, Lt. Col. Marks was able to help extract a Jaguar 20 squadron which was surrounded by the Taliban with no casualties. This is just one of the many successful combat missions Lt. Col. Marks has had.

It is with great honor that I recognize the dedicated service of U.S. Air Force Pilot Lt. Col. John "Karl" Marks. Please join me in congratulating this true American hero for his dedicated valor and service to our Nation.

IN RECOGNITION OF SERVICE OF
NAMI NEW HAMPSHIRE EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR KENNETH NOR-
TON

HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 1, 2022

Mr. PAPPAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Kenneth Norton's nearly 20 years of service to the National Alliance of Mental Illness of New Hampshire. For the past two decades, Ken has served his community as a steadfast advocate for mental health services and suicide prevention leading the way before many in today's society recognized the importance of behavioral health.

Ken started with NAMI NH in 2003 to help create and grow prevention programming and spread awareness to policy makers, providers, and families across our state. By focusing his efforts on the organizations three cornerstones of support, education and advocacy, Ken has significantly expanded NAMI's presence in New Hampshire after stepping into the role of Executive Director in 2011. Under his leadership, the staff of NAMI NH, the budget, and the number of people served has quadrupled in size recognized by their well-deserved Non-profit Impact Award from the NH Center for Nonprofits in 2019.

By working with lawmakers and the public advocates such as NAMI NH and other mental health advocates, Congress has delivered expanded funding opportunities to prevent, educate, and treat our communities in need. Using these new grant opportunities NAMI NH offers Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Mental Health Awareness & Deescalation training for our police, fire, and EMS. This allows our first responders to learn how to best manage individuals experiencing mental illness so they

may protect the public while ensuring their own safety in these scenarios. NAMI programs, such as CIT, help develop professionals and individuals from all backgrounds and strengthen the communities they serve.

Since the start of the coronavirus pandemic we have seen increased anxiety, fear, isolation, and grief from people of all ages increasing the need for mental health services. The strain placed on hospitals to treat this new infectious disease has limited access to critical services including behavior health. Yet advocates like Ken never faltered despite this unprecedented time and continued his efforts to support community members in need of behavioral health services.

While in Congress I am proud to have worked with Ken to open opportunities for mental health, suicide prevention, and addition services, and I am grateful for the devoted staff and volunteers at NAMI NH for their tremendous work.

On behalf of my constituents in New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I want to thank Ken for his continued dedication to the wellbeing of fellow Granite Staters and wish him the best as he transitions from his role as Executive Director.

HONORING RETIRED ARMY COLONEL MIKE PLUMMER FOR HIS DEDICATION IN SERVING FORT DRUM AND THE NORTH COUNTRY

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 1, 2022

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the extraordinary life of retired Army Colonel Mike Plummer. Colonel Mike Plummer played a pivotal role in reactivating the 10th Mountain Infantry Division and bringing it to Fort Drum, New York. Col. Plummer's prioritization of creating an enduring bond between Fort Drum and the community forever changed the North Country. Col. Plummer graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1960 prior to serving in Vietnam. For the next thirty years, Col. Plummer valiantly served in infantry units at every level of the XVIII Airborne Corps.

While working at the Pentagon during the waning days of the Cold War, Col. Plummer recognized the growing importance of light infantry units. He was tasked with flying to northern New York to scope out Fort Drum as a potential base for the newly reactivated 10th Mountain Light Infantry Division. This visit would sway Col. Plummer into advocating for Fort Drum to be the home of the 10th Mountain Division. He believed the harsh winter conditions of Fort Drum would create a division that was prepared for any environment they may encounter. In 1984, Plummer brought the 10th Mountain Division to Fort Drum and immediately prioritized creating a strong relationship between the military and the North Country community. The required expansion of Fort Drum, prior to the arrival of the 10th Mountain Division, created many jobs and stimulated the economy in the North Country. Plummer's role in introducing the 10th Mountain Division into the region

changed the North Country and the Watertown community forever.

After serving as the 10th Mountain Division's first Chief of Staff at Fort Drum, Col. Plummer retired in 1991. Following his retirement from the Army, Col. Plummer remained committed to improving the North Country community and bettering the lives of Fort Drum soldiers. In 1992, Col. Plummer created the Adopt-a-Platoon program, which gathered community members together to write letters and send care packages to deployed soldiers and host a pizza party when they returned. This program started out local in the North Country and has now developed into a national program that has adopted service members of all branches of the military. The success of the Adopt-a-Platoon program is entirely due to Col. Plummer's dedication to ensuring the local community supports their service members.

Col. Plummer dedicated his career to improving the lives of others. In addition to the Adopt-a-Platoon program, Col. Plummer served as an advisor to the Board of Directors of Advocate Drum, created the Yellow Ribbon campaign, organized scholarship funds for family members of the 10th Mountain Division soldiers killed or wounded in action. Helped establish the soldier 101 program in the North Country to give the community a better understanding of the life of a soldier, and developed the idea for the "North Country Honors the Mountain" monument in Watertown's Thompson Park. This monument commemorates the lasting impact that the 10th Mountain Division has on the North Country and pays tribute to the sacrifice of every Fort Drum soldier.

Col. Plummer has made an indelible impact on the North Country and Fort Drum. Throughout his entire life he put his family, the 10th Mountain Division, and the North Country above himself. On behalf of New York's 21st Congressional District, I am honored to remember and celebrate the life of Col. Mike Plummer. The impact he has made on the North Country can never be overstated.

TRIBUTE TO HONOR THE LIFE OF LEONARD WARE

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 1, 2022

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the rich life and distinguished career of Leonard Ware. Leonard was born on January 19, 1928, in Everett, Washington, and died at his Palo Alto home on December 19, 2021. With him at his death bed were his wife Jeanne, and his dog Jake.

Leonard Ware earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Washington and his law degree from Syracuse University in 1953. He was a member of the honorary legal society Phi Delta Phi.

Leo served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Western District of Washington from 1953 to 1955, and was a member of the Palo Alto Planning Commission from 1965 to 1968. He was a member of the Palo Alto, Santa Clara County, Washington State and American Bar Associations. He was also a member of the State Bar of California and the California Trial Lawyers Association, as well as the Palo Alto Club and the Bohemian Club.

Based on a handshake in 1969, Leo and his friend John Freidenrich established their law firm which became known as Ware Fletcher and Freidenrich. The firm prospered, merged several times and was eventually acquired by the global firm of DLA Piper.

Leo went to Mississippi in the '60s to register Black voters and was a staunch supporter of civil rights laws. He was an original investor in Embarcadero Media, on the original board of University National Bank and Trust, and with his wife, was a strong supporter of many non-profit organizations.

Leo loved spending time at his ranch in Morgan Hill where he raised animals and grew grapes, and he will be deeply missed by everyone who had the privilege to know him.

Leo leaves his wife of 62 years, Jeanne, and his daughters Laura and Pamela, his son Lincoln, nine grandchildren and three great grandchildren. His daughter Jennifer predeceased him.

Madam Speaker, I ask the entire House of Representatives to join me in extending our condolences to Leonard Ware's family, and in honoring Leo for the excellence of his life, his work and his countless contributions. We are a better community and a stronger country because of him.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF RON BERNAL

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 1, 2022

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of Ron Bernal upon his retirement from the City of Antioch.

Ron has been a longtime friendly face working for the Antioch. Ron joined the City of Antioch as assistant city engineer in 1998. Prior to that, Ron worked for the City of Dixon for 14 years. In 2009, Ron began working as public works director for the City of Antioch. In 2016, Ron was promoted to assistant city manager and in 2017 he stepped into the position of City Manager.

During his time as City Manager, Ron was a strong leader on a variety of key issues in the city such as homelessness, water rights, and economic development. Ron was particularly passionate about housing issues in the community. He often met with unhoused residents and played a critical role in ensuring that they have access to basic services. He also implemented vital police reforms within the Antioch Police Department. Ron was instrumental in leading the City through some of the greatest structural improvements that Antioch has ever undergone.

In his personal life, Ron enjoys spending time with his wife, Irma, their children, and their three grandchildren.

Ron's work has had a significant impact on the City of Antioch and its residents. Please join me in congratulating Ron on his retirement and honoring Ron for his 36 years of public service.